



Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations Policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at ECITB Approved Centres and learners who are delivering or are registered on an ECITB regulated qualification or unit. It is also for use by our staff to ensure they deal with all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests in a consistent manner.

This Policy Outlines:

- ECITB's arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and giving special consideration in relation to our qualifications;
- how learners qualify for reasonable adjustments and special consideration;
- the reasonable adjustments we permit and those where permission is required in advance before they are applied;
- what special consideration can be given to learners.

Approved Centre Responsibility

It is important that Approved Centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of ECITB qualifications are fully aware of the contents of the policy and are able to advise learners appropriately.

Review Arrangements

We will review this policy and its associated procedures as part of our continuous improvement arrangements and revise it, as and when necessary, in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (e.g. to align with any enquiries process established by the regulators) and to identify any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of enquiries received.

Arrangements not Covered by this Policy

Circumstances for both internal and external assessment not covered in this policy should be discussed with ECITB before assessment takes place. Please contact us via the details provided at the end of this manual.

Appeals

If you wish to appeal against our decision to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to our Appeals Policy.



Policy Overview

In order to comply with equalities law, ECITB must have in place clear arrangements to make reasonable adjustments in relation to its qualifications so that a disabled learner is able to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the qualification. In addition ECITB is required to give special consideration to a learner who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside their control which may affect the outcome of an assessment.

Reasonable adjustments or special consideration may therefore be required at the time of assessment where:

- learners have a permanent disability or specific learning need;
- learners have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning need;
- learners are indisposed at the time of the assessment.

Learners working towards ECITB qualifications are required to compile a portfolio of evidence which can consist of a mixture of work products, observation reports, witness testimonies, underpinning knowledge tests, etc. Making appropriate access arrangements in qualifications of this type can be easier than in qualifications where the mode of assessment is more firmly fixed. However, health and safety issues in the engineering construction industry mean that some qualifications cannot be attempted by learners with certain disabilities e.g. blindness.

It is important to ascertain the most appropriate method of obtaining evidence when a learner is first accepted onto a programme. The learner may present their evidence in any format, as long as it enables them to demonstrate that they have met the specified assessment criteria. For example, a learner may present their evidence on audio or visual recording rather than in written formats. Alternatively, oral questioning or witness testimonies may replace written responses.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration is made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement so long as the comparability, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. In particular, the health and safety of all learners is paramount and reasonable adjustments cannot be made in circumstances where to do so would jeopardise the safety of the learner or others. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start. For advice on permitted reasonable adjustments, please see Appendix 1.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. It is made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.



Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity;
- adapting assessment materials, such as using oral methods rather than written;
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a reader;
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software;
- providing the mechanism to have different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or copying to different coloured paper for paper-based assessments;
- providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view assessment papers.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the assessment. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

ECITB and Approved Centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to assessment. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration. The reasonable adjustments that can be given will vary widely from qualification to qualification. For example, the adjustments that could be made for a qualification in installing engineering construction plant and systems would be very different from those that might be appropriate for a management qualification.

Where evidence is produced in Braille or signed onto video, it is the centre's responsibility to ensure that a person, who is suitably qualified in Braille or sign language, is available to translate the material for the internal and external Quality Assurer if this is required.

Definition of Special Consideration

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment has taken place if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment.

For example, special consideration could apply to a learner who had temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury;
- some other event outside of their control.

and which has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence.



Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect his / her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his / her potential ability.

Centres should note that:

- where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a Licence to Practise, it may not be possible to apply special consideration;
- in some circumstances, for example for on-demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

Process for Requesting Reasonable Adjustments and/or Special Consideration

If an Approved Centre is making a request to ECITB on behalf of its learners it should complete a Reasonable Adjustments Request Form (VQ011) or a Special Consideration Request Form (VQ012) as appropriate. You will be asked to supply relevant supporting information, for example medical evidence or a statement from the assessor or invigilator.

Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted no later than 30 working days before the assessment.

It is unlikely that ECITB Approved Centres will need to request special consideration for their learners as assessment should be carried out at an appropriate time. Should a learner be potentially disadvantaged through missing or being adversely affected during a centre-set assessment, it may be appropriate for special consideration to be given. In such cases, a request should be submitted to ECITB as soon as possible but no more than 5 working days after the assessment.

How ECITB Will Deal With Requests

We will acknowledge all requests within 2 working days of receipt. The request will then be evaluated by ECITB's Operations Manager or other appropriate person with the aim of a decision being given within 5 working days. Some requests for reasonable adjustments may take longer to evaluate, particularly if we need to call on specialist advice. If we are unable to respond in this timeframe we will provide you with an estimated response date.

Appendix 1 – Reasonable Adjustments Permissions Table

This table outlines some of the decisions on reasonable adjustments that can be made. However, few of them will occur in practice and centres and External Quality Assurers have a duty to seek advice from ECITB in any case where they are in doubt if an adjustment is needed or how it should be applied. Approved Centres should be aware of their responsibilities if they set any tests under examination conditions.

Key:

- Centre – Reasonable adjustment permitted at the discretion of the Approved Centre
- EQA – Consult External Quality Assurer for permission
- ECITB – Apply to ECITB for permission

Reasonable Adjustment	Assessments NOT taken under examination conditions	Assessments taken under examination conditions
Extra time up to 25%	EQA	EQA
Extra time in excess of 25%	ECITB	ECITB
Supervised rest breaks	Centre	ECITB
Change in the organisation of assessment room	Centre	Centre
Separate accommodation within the centre	Centre	ECITB
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	EQA	ECITB
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners	EQA	ECITB
Use of assistive software	ECITB	ECITB
Use of bilingual and bilingual translation dictionaries	Centre	Centre
Assessment material in enlarged format	Centre	Centre
Assessment material in Braille	ECITB	ECITB
Language modified assessment material	EQA	ECITB
Assessment material in BSL	ECITB	ECITB
Assessment material on coloured paper	Centre	Centre
Assessment material in audio format	EQA	EQA
Use of ICT	EQA	EQA
Responses using electronic devices	EQA	EQA
Responses in BSL	ECITB	ECITB
Responses in Braille	ECITB	ECITB
Reader	EQA	EQA
Scribe	ECITB	ECITB
BSL/English interpreter	EQA	ECITB
Prompter	ECITB	ECITB
Practical assistant	ECITB	ECITB
Transcriber	ECITB	ECITB
Other	ECITB	ECITB



Contact us

If you have any queries about any aspect of this process, please contact:

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